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(54) **DIGITAL FILTER FOR A DELTA-SIGMA  
ANALOG-TO-DIGITAL CONVERTER**

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See application file for complete search history.

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**Related U.S. Application Data**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

(63) Continuation of application No. 17/381,460, filed on  
Jul. 21, 2021, now Pat. No. 11,552,648.

An analog-to-digital converter (ADC) includes a modulator,  
an integrator circuit, and first and second differentiator  
circuits. The modulator has a modulator input and a modu-  
lator output. The modulator input is configured to receive an  
analog signal, and the modulator is configured to generate  
digital data on the modulator output. The integrator circuit  
has an integrator circuit input and an integrator output. The  
integrator input is coupled to the modulator output. The first  
differentiator circuit is coupled to the integrator output, and  
the first differentiator circuit is configured to be clocked with  
a first clock. The second differentiator circuit is coupled to  
the integrator output, and the second differentiator circuit  
configured to be clocked with a second clock. The second  
clock is out of phase with respect to the first clock.

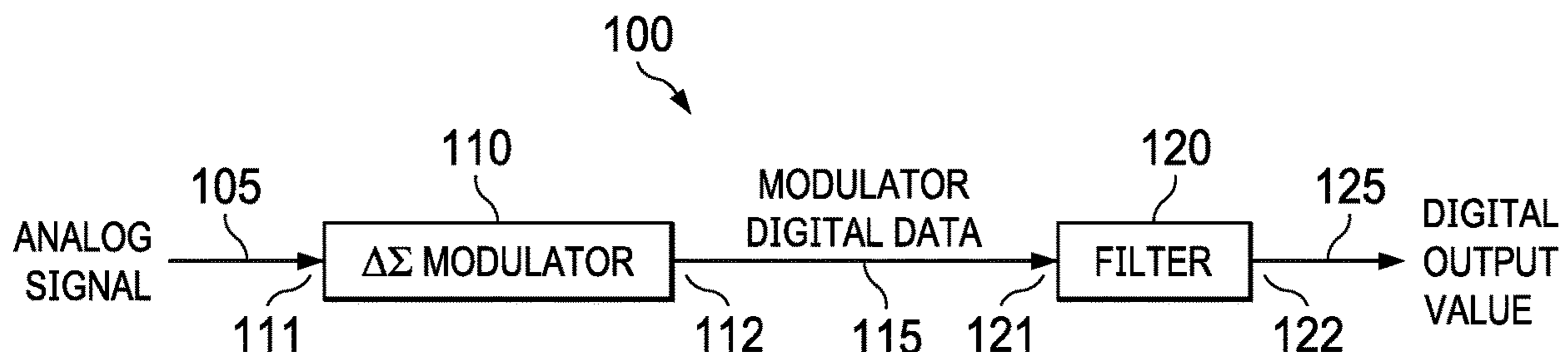
(60) Provisional application No. 63/140,585, filed on Jan.  
22, 2021.

(51) **Int. Cl.**  
**H03M 3/00** (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**  
CPC ..... **H03M 3/438** (2013.01); **H03M 3/458**  
(2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**  
CPC ..... H03M 3/438; H03M 3/458

**20 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets**



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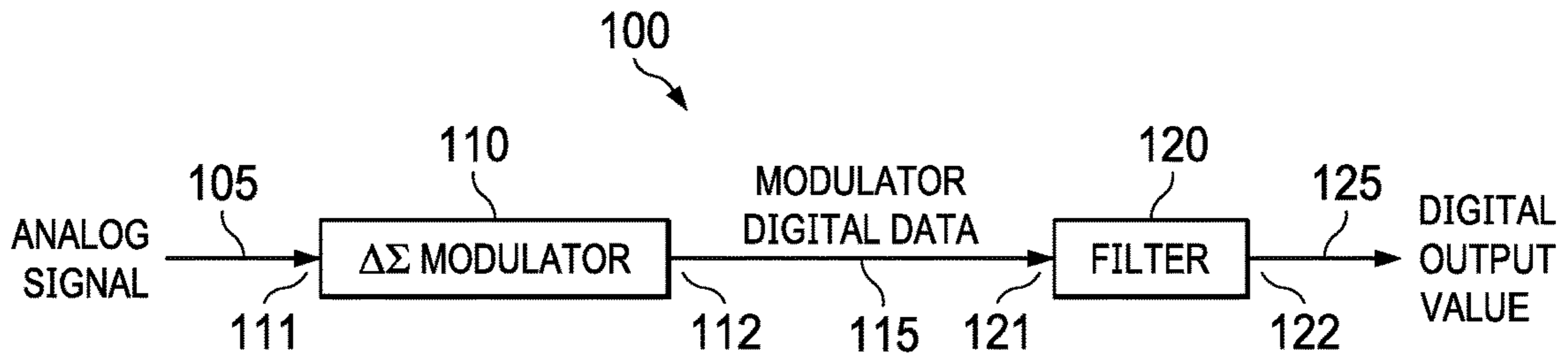


FIG. 1

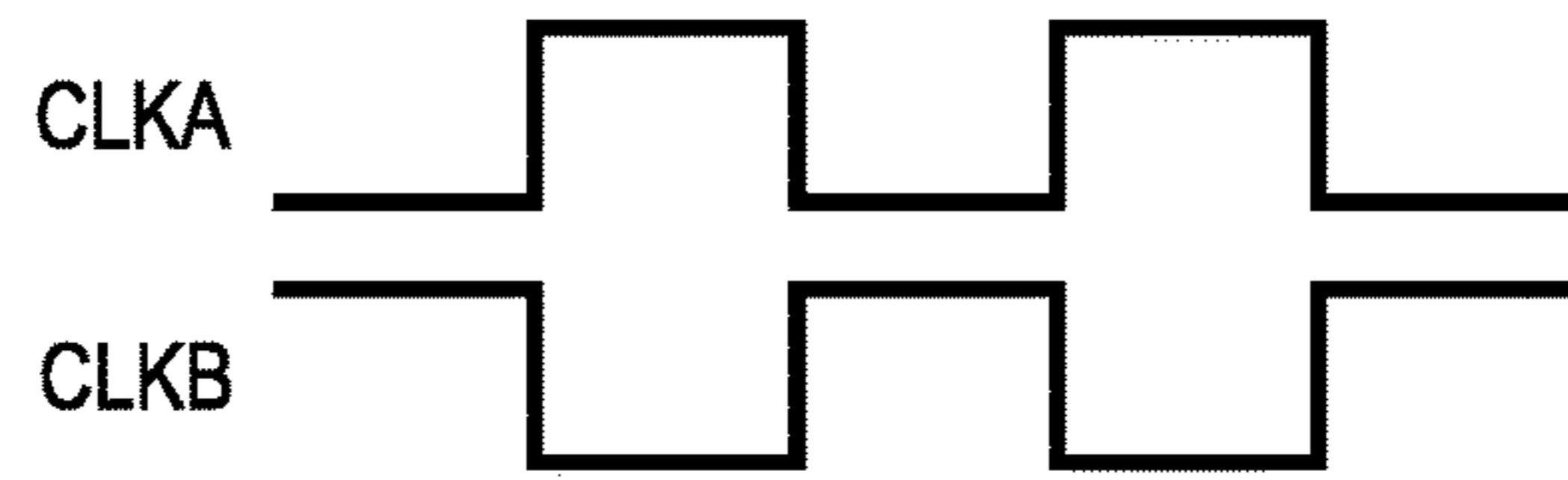


FIG. 3

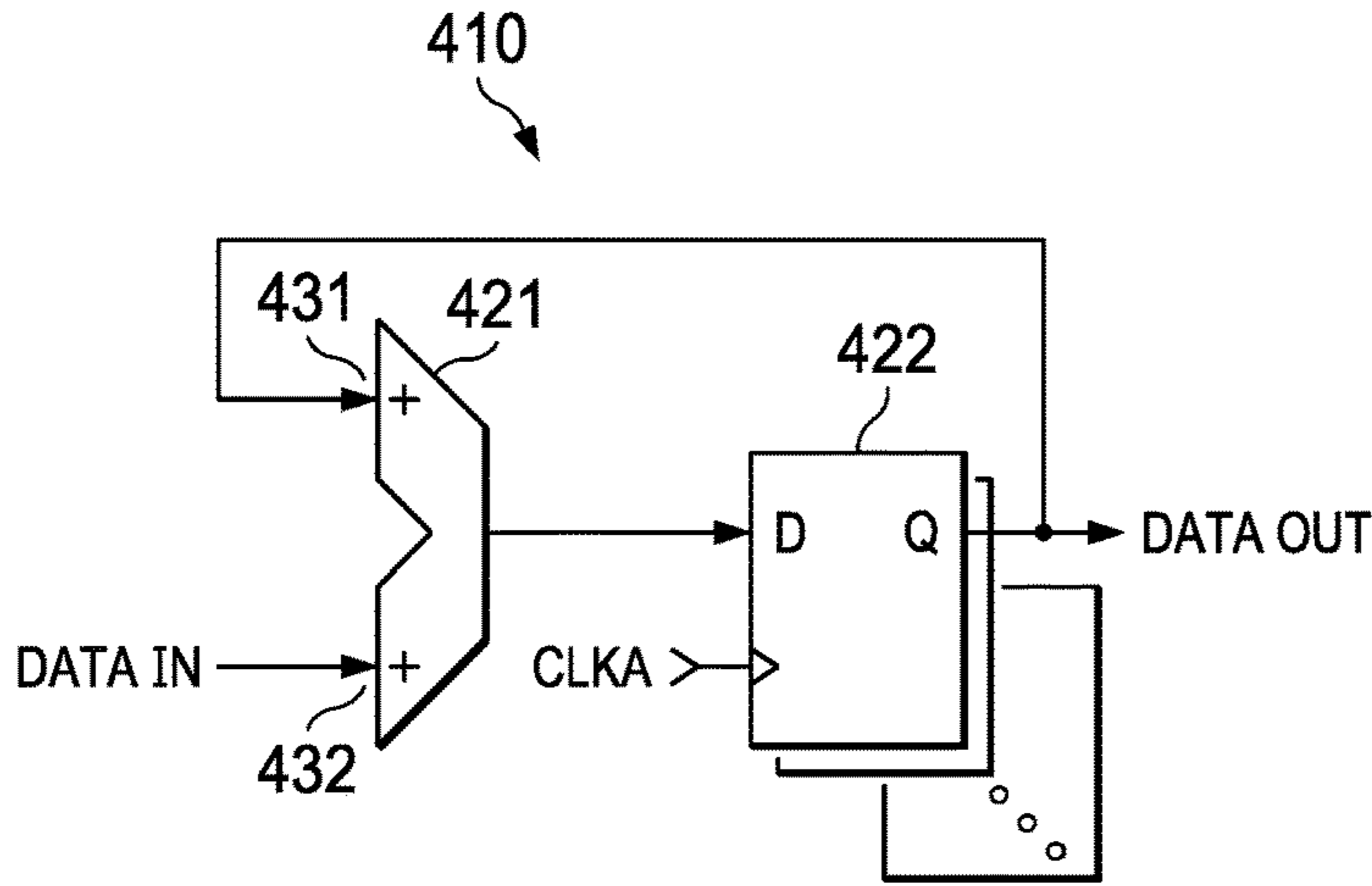


FIG. 4

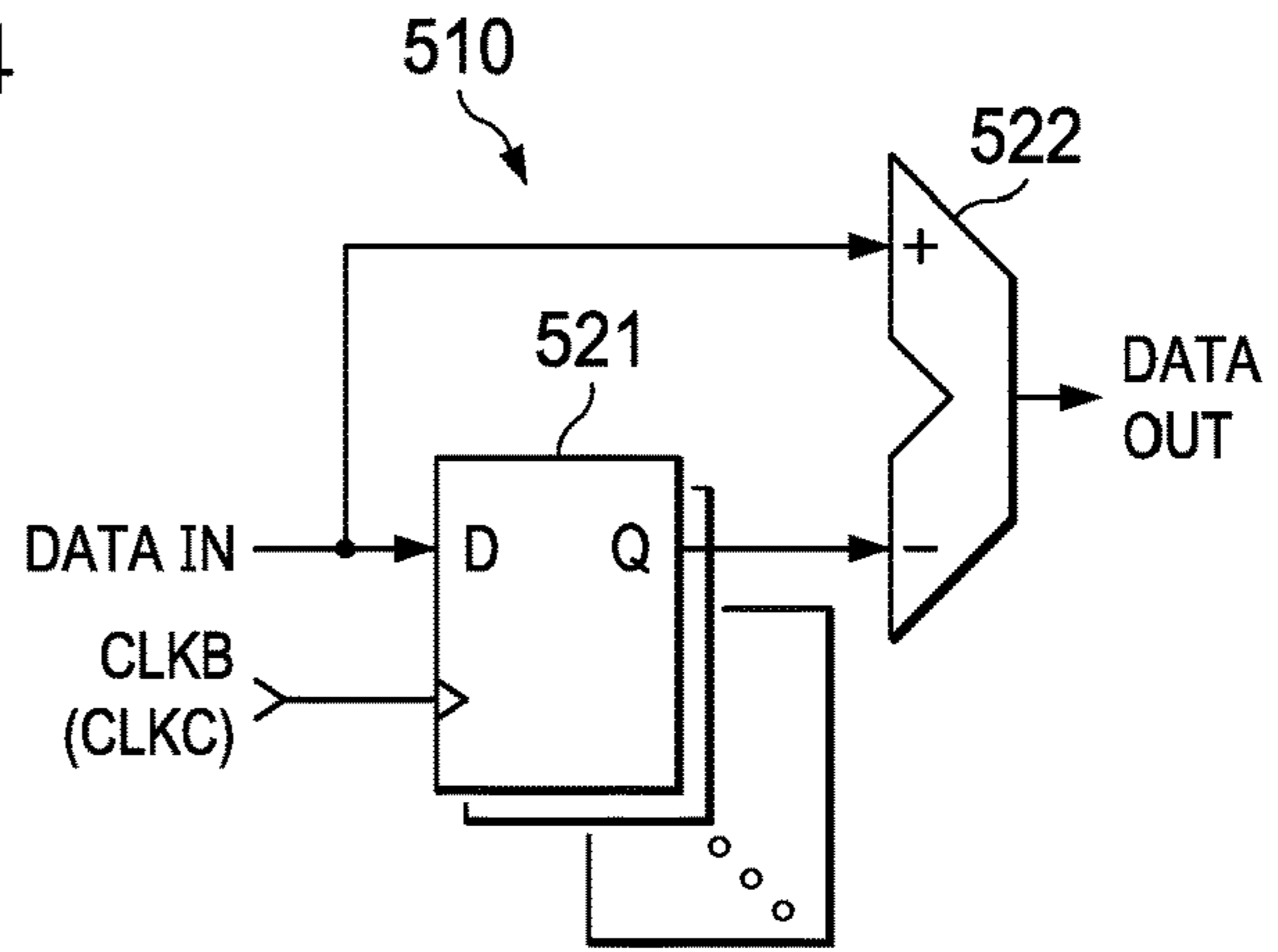


FIG. 5

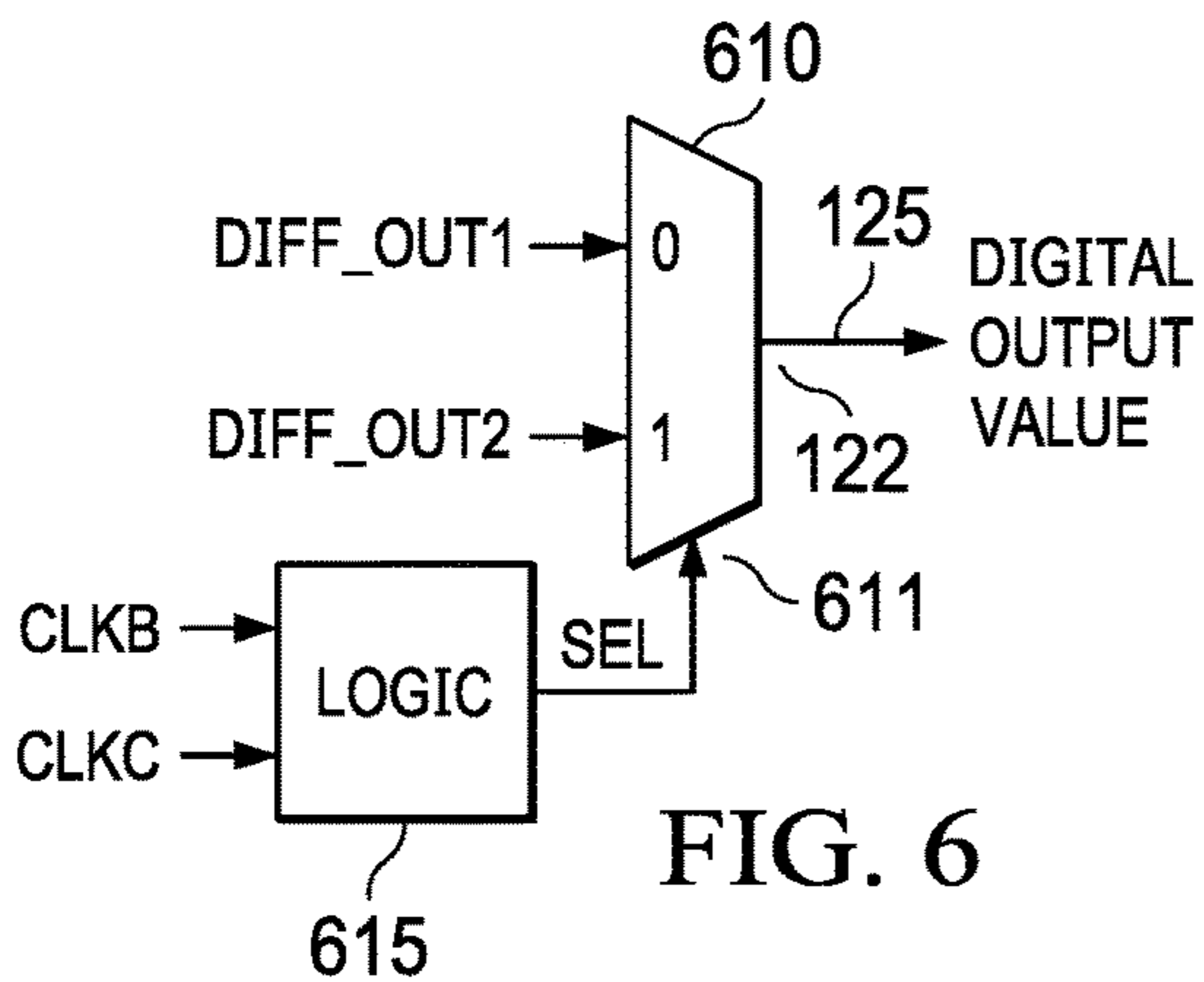


FIG. 6

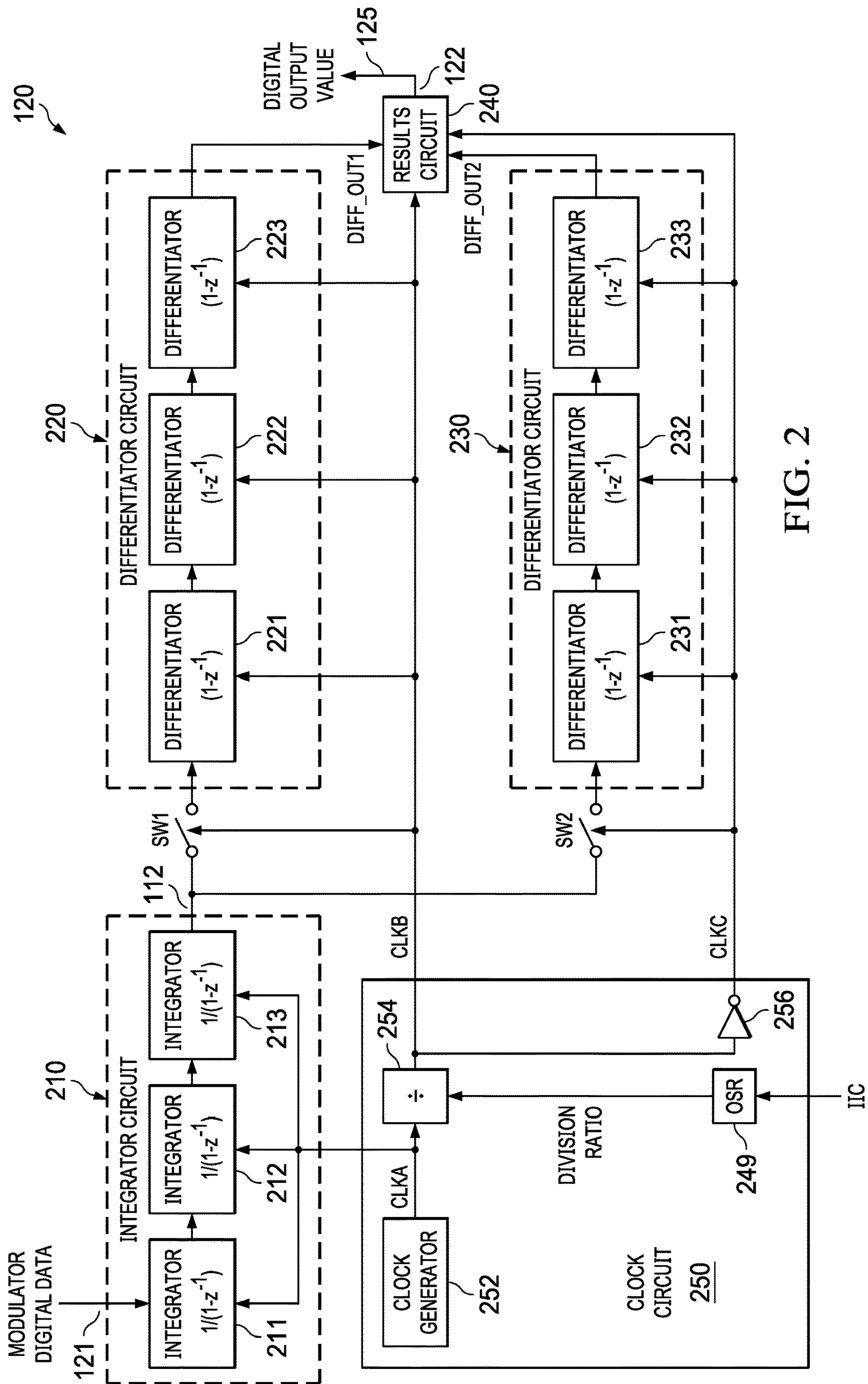


FIG. 2

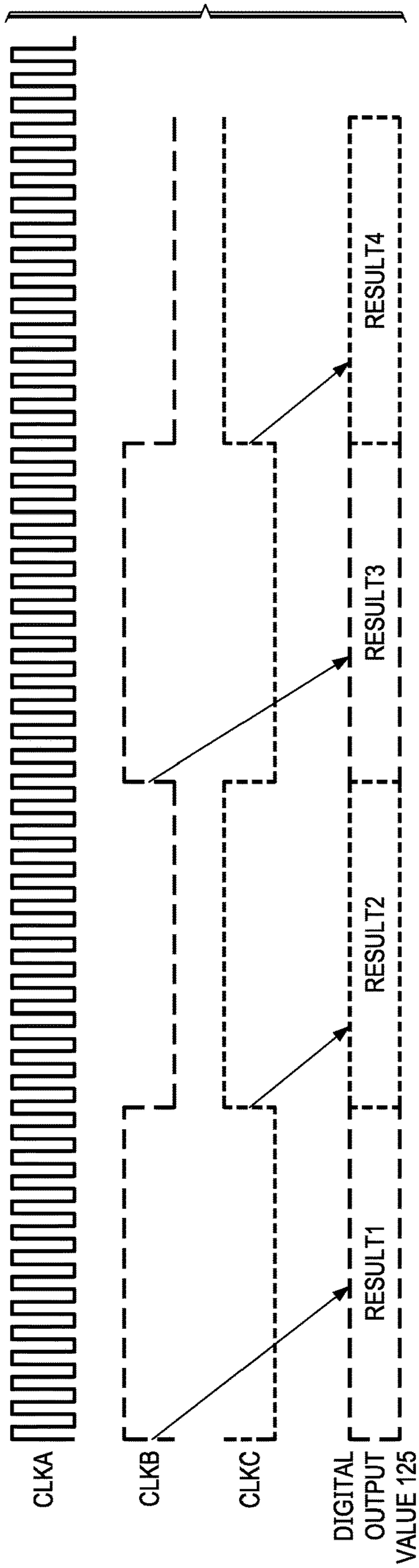


FIG. 7

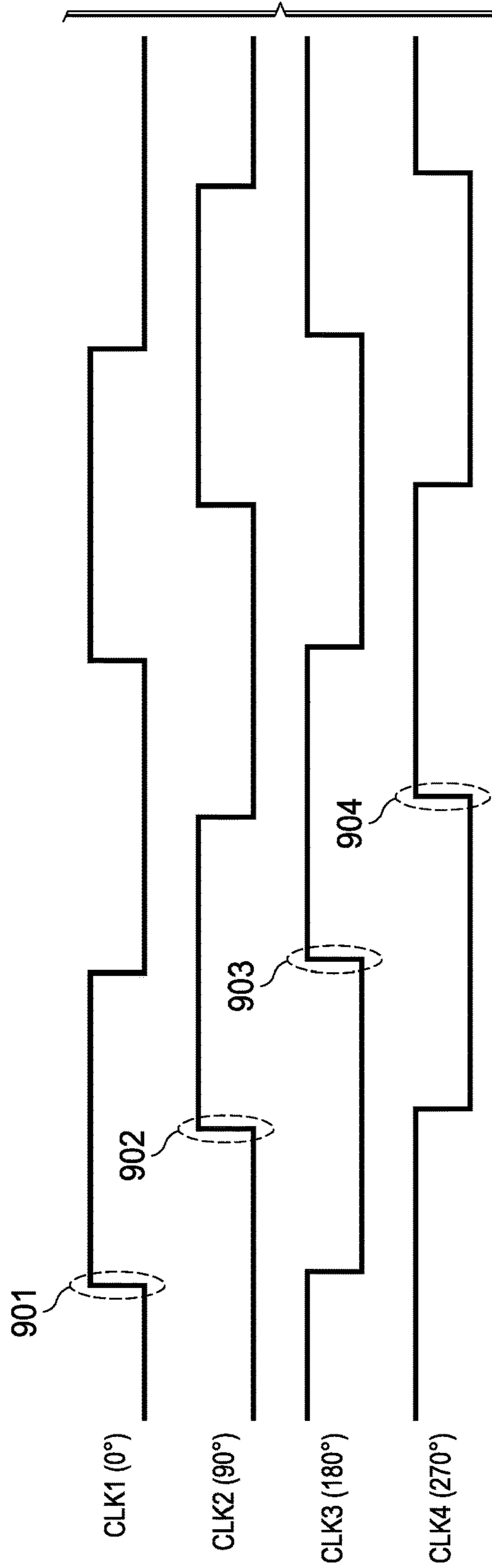


FIG. 9

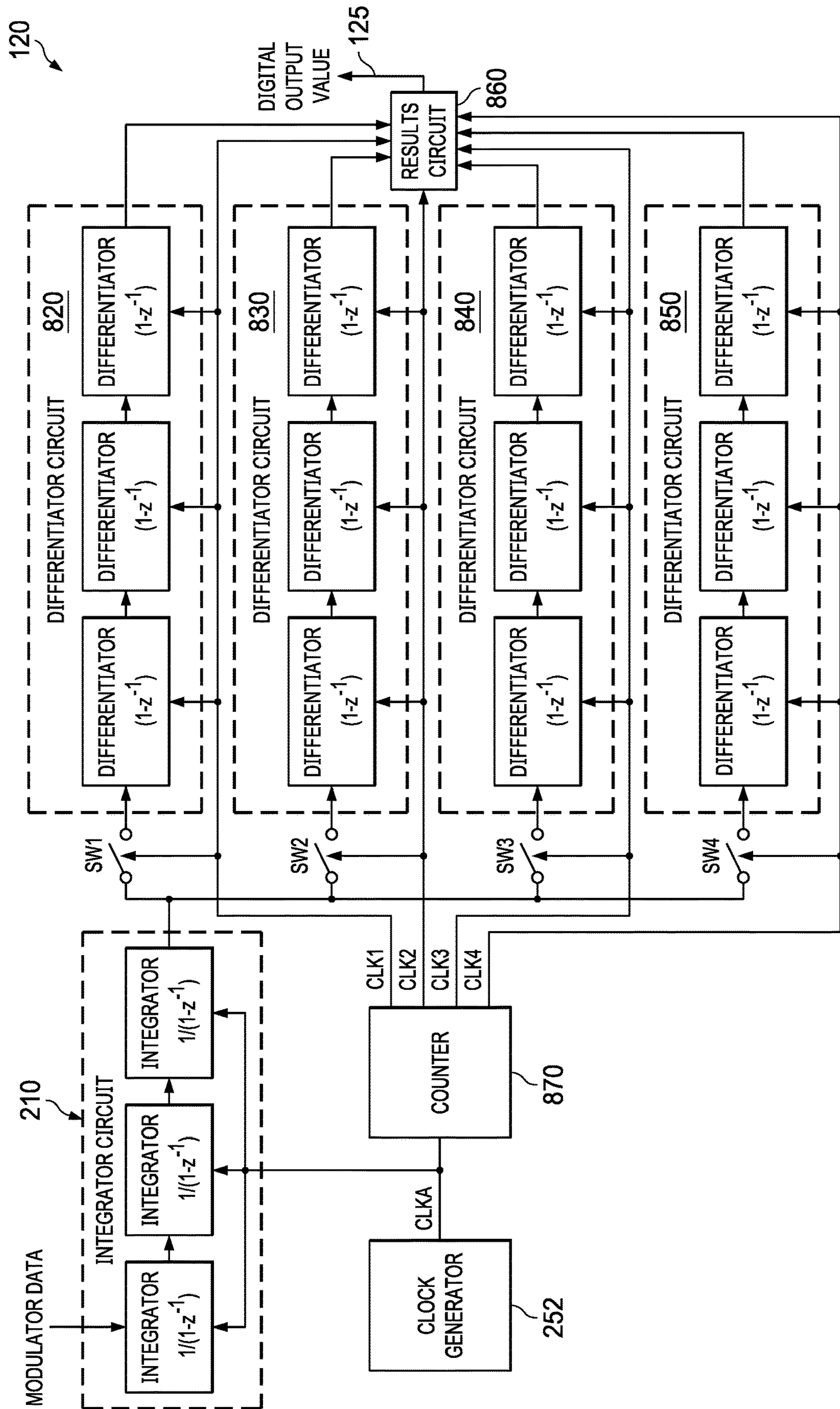


FIG. 8

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DIGITAL FILTER FOR A DELTA-SIGMA  
ANALOG-TO-DIGITAL CONVERTERCROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED  
APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 17/381,460, filed on Jul. 21, 2021, which claims priority to U.S. Provisional Application No. 63/140,585, filed Jan. 22, 2021, which is hereby incorporated by reference.

## BACKGROUND

Various applications exist for analog-to-digital converters (ADCs). An ADC converts an input analog signal to a digital output value. One type of ADC is a delta-sigma ADC. A delta-sigma ADC includes a delta-sigma modulator coupled to a filter. The delta-sigma modulator receives the input analog signal and generates output modulator data that includes a set of logic 0's and 1's. The number of logic 0's relative to the number of logic 1's in a given time period is a function of the magnitude of the input analog signal. The filter receives the output modulator data from the delta-sigma modulator. The filter attenuates high-frequency noise and decimates the filtered modulator data to produce a lower data rate output value (lower than the sampling rate of the delta-sigma modulator).

## SUMMARY

In one example, an analog-to-digital converter (ADC) includes a modulator, an integrator circuit, and first and second differentiator circuits. The modulator has a modulator input and a modulator output. The modulator input is configured to receive an analog signal, and the modulator is configured to generate digital data on the modulator output. The integrator circuit has an integrator circuit input and an integrator output. The integrator input is coupled to the modulator output. The first differentiator circuit is coupled to the integrator output, and the first differentiator circuit is configured to be clocked with a first clock. The second differentiator circuit is coupled to the integrator output, and the second differentiator circuit configured to be clocked with a second clock. The second clock is out of phase with respect to the first clock.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a detailed description of various examples, reference will now be made to the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a delta-sigma analog-to-digital converter having a filter in accordance with an example implementation.

FIG. 2 is a block diagram of the filter having two differentiator circuits in accordance with an example.

FIG. 3 is a timing diagram of clocks used to clock the differentiator circuits in accordance with an example.

FIG. 4 is a logic circuit implementation of an integrator within the filter.

FIG. 5 is a logic circuit implementation of a differentiator within the filter.

FIG. 6 is a circuit implementation of a results circuit within the filter.

FIG. 7 is a timing diagram showing the relationship of the clock used to clock the integrators within the filter as well as the clocks used to clock the differentiator circuits.

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FIG. 8 is a block diagram of the filter having four differentiator circuits in accordance with an example.

FIG. 9 is a timing diagram of the clocks used to clock the four differentiator circuits in accordance with an example.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FIG. 1 shows an example implementation of an ADC 100 that converts an input analog signal 105 to a digital output value 125. In this example, the ADC 100 is a delta-sigma ADC 100. Delta-sigma ADC 100 includes a delta-sigma modulator 110 and a filter 120. The delta-sigma modulator 110 includes a modulator input 111 and a modulator output 112. The filter 120 includes a filter input 121 and a filter output 122. The modulator input 111 receives the input analog signal 105 and produces modulator digital data 115 on its modulator output 112. The modulator digital data 115 may be digital data (logic highs and lows) having a variable duty cycle that is proportional to the magnitude of the input analog signal 105.

The modulator output 112 is coupled to the filter input 121. The filter 120 filters (e.g., low-pass filters) the modulator digital data 115 and produces the digital output values 125 on the filter output 122. Various types of filters exist for implementation in a delta-sigma ADC. In the examples described herein, the filter 120 is a "sinc" filter. In general, a sinc filter implementation for the delta-sigma ADC 100 is a low-pass filter. The delta-sigma modulator 110 samples the input analog signal 105 at a particular (application-specific) sampling rate. The filter 120 filters the modulator digital data 115 at the same sampling rate. The sampling rate may be significantly faster than any downstream consumer (e.g., a processor) could process. Accordingly, the filter 120 decimates the fast, filtered data to produce a stream of digital output values 125 a lower output rate than the sampling rate. The ratio of the sampling rate to the output data rate is referred to as the "oversampling ratio" (OSR). The oversampling ratio also may be referred to as the decimation ratio. In one example, the OSR is 100, which means the filter outputs one digital output value 125 for every 100 cycles of modulator digital data 115.

A larger OSR means that filter 120 outputs fewer digital output values for a given number of modulator digital data (a lower output data rate), but a larger OSR also results in a decrease in noise for the digital output values 125. Conversely, a smaller OSR is characterized by a higher output data rate, but with an increase in noise. Thus, a tradeoff exists between OSR and noise. To achieve lower noise digital output values 125, a higher OSR should be implemented in the filter 120, but that will result in a lower output data rate. If a higher output data rate is desired, a lower OSR should be implemented, but the resulting digital output values 125 will experience an increase in noise.

FIG. 2 shows an example implementation of filter 120 that provides for an increased data rate for a given OSR value compared to conventional sinc filters. The filter 120 of FIG. 2 includes an integrator circuit 210, differentiator circuits 220 and 230, a results circuit 240, a clock circuit 250, and switches SW1 and SW2. Switch SW1 is coupled between the integrator circuit 210 and differentiator circuit 220. Switch SW2 is coupled between the integrator circuit 210 and differentiator circuit 230. In this example, integrator circuit 210 is a three-stage integrator including integrators 211, 212, and 213. Differentiator circuits 220 and 230 are three-stage differentiators. Differentiator circuit 220 includes differentiators 221, 222, and 223, and differentiator circuit 230 includes differentiators 231, 232, and 233.

When switch SW1 is closed, the output of integrator **213** is provided to the input of differentiator **221** within the differentiator circuit **220**. Similarly, when switch SW2 is closed, the output of integrator **213** is provided to the input of differentiator **231** within the differentiator circuit **230**. The outputs of differentiator circuits **220** and **230** (the outputs of the last differentiator **223** and **233**, respectively in each differentiator circuit) are provided to the results circuit **240**. The output signal from differentiator **223** is DIFF\_OUT1. The output signal from differentiator **233** is DIFF\_OUT2. Output signals DIFF\_OUT1 and DIFF\_OUT2 are provided as input signals to the results circuit **240**. In one example (and further described below regarding FIG. 6), the results circuit **240** is a multiplexer which outputs one or the other of the differentiator circuit outputs as the digital output value **225**. The results circuit **240** outputs DIFF\_OUT1 or DIFF\_OUT2 as the digital output value **225** responsive to, for example, respective rising edges of CLKB and CLKC.

The clock circuit **250** is coupled to integrators **211-213** of integrator circuit **210**, differentiators **221-223** of differentiator circuit **220**, and differentiators **231-233** of differentiator circuit **230**. The clock circuit **250** generates clock signals (also called “clocks”) CLKA, CLKB, and CLKC. Clock CLKA is provided to switch SW1 and to integrators **211**, **212**, and **213** of integrator circuit **210**. Clock CLKB is provided to switch SW2 and to differentiators **231**, **232**, and **233** of differentiator circuit **230**. The clock circuit **250** includes a clock generator **252** which generates clock CLKA. Clock CLKA is at a frequency that is equal to the sampling rate of the delta-sigma modulator **110**. In one example, the frequency of clock CLKA is 20 MHz. The clock generator **252** is coupled to a frequency divider **254**, and the output of the frequency divider is coupled to an input of an inverter **256**. The frequency divider **254** divides down the frequency of clock CLKA to produce clock CLKB.

In one example, the division ratio implemented within the frequency divider **254** is equal to the value of OSR. For example, for a target value of OSR equal to 100, the frequency divider **254** produces a clock frequency for clock CLKB that is one one-hundredth ( $1/100$ ) of the frequency of clock CLKA. In one example, a register **249** is programmable (e.g., via a serial interface such as the Inter-Integrated Circuit (IIC) interface). The value programmed into register **249** is used as the division ratio for the frequency divider and thus the OSR value. The inverter **256** produces clock CLKC that has the same frequency as clock CLKB but the clock CLKC is out-of-phase with respect to clock CLKB. In the specific example of FIG. 2, clock CLKC is 180 degrees output-of-phase with respect to clock CLKB (clock CLKC is a logical inverse of clock CLKB). FIG. 3 shows example waveforms for clocks CLKA and CLKB.

FIG. 4 is a circuit **410** that is example implementation of each integrator **211-213**. Circuit **410** includes an adder **421** coupled to multiple data (D) flip-flops **422**. In particular, the output of adder **421** is coupled to the D input of the flip-flops **422**, and the Q output of the D flip-flops **422** is coupled an input **431** of adder **421**. Input data (Data In) is provided to input **432** of adder **421**. In one example, Data In is a multibit value (e.g., 24 bits). In one example, the number of D flip-flops **422** equals the number of bits of Data In. If Data In has 24 bits, then there are 24 D flip-flops **422**. The Q outputs of the D flip-flops are coupled to the multi-bit input **431** of the adder **421**. The adder **421** adds together the data on its inputs **431** and **432** and provides each bit of the resulting summed value to a respective D input of D flip-flops **422**. The D flip-flops are clocked by clock CLKA. The circuit **410** is an accumulator in that the output bits

(Data Out) are fed back and added into the next Data In value. The multi-bit Data Out of integrator **211** is coupled to the Data In of integrator **212**, and the Data Out of integrator **212** is coupled to the Data In of integrator **213**. The Data Out of integrator **213** is coupled with switches SW1 and SW2. Integrator **211** accumulates the modulator digital data **115** and provides the accumulated value to the next integrator **212** in the series of integrators. Integrator **212** accumulates the accumulated result from integrator **211**. Similarly, integrator **213** accumulates the accumulated result from integrator **212**.

FIG. 5 is a circuit **510** that is example implementation of each differentiator **221-223** and **231-233**. Circuit **510** includes D flip-flops **521** whose Q outputs are coupled to a multi-bit inverting input of an adder **522**. Each input data bit (Data In) to the differentiator circuit **510** is coupled to the D input of a respective D flip-flop **521** and to the respective non-inverting input of adder **522**. The adder **522** subtracts the data on the Q outputs of D flip-flops **521** from the current input data (Data In). The adder **522** also may be referred to as a subtractor. The output of adder **522** is Data Out from the differentiator. The D flip-flop **521** is clocked by the respective clock—clock CLKB for differentiators **221-223** and clock CLKC for differentiators **231-233**. With each pulse (e.g., rising edge) of the input clock (CLKB or CLKC), the previously latched data from D flip-flops **521** is subtracted from the current input Data In data value. With respect to the differentiator circuit **220** of FIG. 2, the Data Out of differentiator **221** is coupled to the Data In of differentiator **222**, and the Data Out of differentiator **222** is coupled to the Data In of differentiator **223**. The Data Out of differentiator **223** is DIFF\_OUT1 which is provided to the results circuit **240**. Similarly, the Data Out of differentiator **231** is coupled to the Data In of differentiator **232**, the Data Out of differentiator **232** is coupled to the Data In of differentiator **233**, and the Data Out of differentiator **233** is DIFF\_OUT2 which is provided to the results circuit **240**.

FIG. 6 shows an example implementation of results circuit **240**. In the example of FIG. 6, the results circuit **240** includes a multiplexer **610**. The multiplexer **610** has a 0-input, a 1-input, a selection input **611**, and an output **122**. The output signal DIFF\_OUT1 from differentiator circuit **220** is provided to the 0-input of multiplexer **610**, and the output signal DIFF\_OUT2 from differentiator circuit **230** is provided to the 1-input of multiplexer **610**. A selection signal (SEL) is generated by a logic circuit **615** based on CLKB and CLKC. In one example, the logic circuit **615** is a digital circuit that asserts SEL to a first logic state to select the 0-input of the multiplexer **610** responsive to CLKB being asserted high, and asserts SEL to a second logic state to select the 1-input of the multiplexer **610** responsive to CLKC being asserted high. The selection signal SEL is twice the frequency of CLKB or CLKC and thus the results circuit **240** outputs data at twice the rate of either of the differentiator circuits **220** or **230**. The output **122** of multiplexer **610** provides the digital output value **125** from the filter **120**. In another example, the results circuit **240** is a register that latches the result available from differentiator **223** or differentiator **233**.

FIG. 7 is a timing diagram with examples of clocks CLKA, CLKB, and CLKC and the digital output values **125**. As can be seen, the frequency of clock CLKA is greater than the frequencies of clocks CLKB and CLKC. In this example, each rising edge of clock CLKB causes the differentiator circuit **220** to provide its output data (DIFF\_OUT1) through the results circuit **240** as digital output value **125**, which is shown in FIG. 7 as Result1 and Result3. Each rising edge of



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clock CLKC causes the differentiator circuit 230 to provide its output data (DIFF\_OUT2) through the results circuit 240 as digital output values 125 (Result2 and Result4).

FIG. 7 illustrates that the digital output value 125 is output by the results circuit 240 for each period of clock CLKB (CLKC). Accordingly, for a given OSR level, the filter 120 outputs digital output values 125 at twice the data rate compared to a sinc filter that only has a single differentiator stage. The filter 120 described herein achieves higher output data rates without also suffering an increase in noise.

FIG. 2 includes an integrator circuit with three integrators 211-213 and differentiator circuits 220 and 230, each with three differentiators, thereby implementing a third order sinc filter. The order of the sinc filter should be at least 1 plus the order of the delta sigma modulator 110. The order of the sinc filter 120 can be more than 1 greater than the order of the modulator. For example, if the delta-sigma modulator 110 is a second-order modulator, the filter 120 could be a third order, fourth order, fifth order, etc. sinc filter.

FIG. 2 shows an example of a filter 120 having two differentiator circuits 220 and 230 operable in parallel as explained above. The number of differentiator circuits can be scaled up to more than two differentiator circuits (three, four, etc. differentiator circuits). FIG. 8 shows an example of a filter 120 having four differentiator circuits 820, 830, 840, and 850. Each differentiator circuit in this example includes three differentiators, each implemented, for example, as described above and shown in FIG. 5. Each differentiator circuit 820, 830, 840, and 850 is coupled to integrator circuit 210 by a separate switch. Switch SW81 is coupled between the integrator circuit 210 and differentiator circuit 820. Switch SW82 is coupled between the integrator circuit 210 and differentiator circuit 830. Switch SW83 is coupled between the integrator circuit 210 and differentiator circuit 840. Switch SW84 is coupled between the integrator circuit 210 and differentiator circuit 850.

A counter 870 generates four clocks CLK1, CLK2, CLK3, and CLK4 using CLKA from the clock generator 252. The four clocks CLK1-CLK4 are quadrature clocks with all four clocks having the same frequency and phase-shifted by 90 degrees one clock from the other. The counter 870 may be an up-counter counting from 0 up to the OSR value. Each rising (or falling) edge of CLKA causes the counter 870 to increment its output count value by one. Clocks CLK1-CLK4 are taken from tap points of the counter 870. For example, for an OSR value of 100, CLK1 is forced high at tap point 1 and low at tap point 50. CLK2 (90 degrees phase shifted from CLK1) is taking at tap points 25 and 75 (forced high upon tap point 25 being logic high and forced low upon tap point 50 being logic high). Similarly, CLK3 (180 degrees phase shifted from CLK1) is generated based on tap points 50 and 100 (forced high when tap point 50 is high and forced low when tap point 100 is high), and CLK4 (270 degrees phase shifted from CLK1) is generated based on tap points 75 and 25 (forced high when tap point 75 is high and forced low when tap point 25 is high).

FIG. 9 is a timing diagram of the clocks CLK1-CLK4. The clocks CLK1-CLK4 have the same frequency but are phase-shifted with respect to each other by 90 degrees (0 degrees, 90 degrees, 180 degrees, and 270 degrees). Each rising edge (or falling edge) of a clock causes its respective switch to close and its respective differentiators to be clocked thereby outputting a bit to the results circuit 860. For example, rising edge 901 causes switch SW81 to be closed and differentiator circuit 820 to output a bit to the results circuit 860. Rising edge 902 causes switch SW82 to be closed and differentiator circuit 830 to output a bit to the

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results circuit 860. Similarly, rising edges 903 and 904 cause their respective switches SW83 and SW84 to close and their respective differentiator circuits 840 and 850 to output sequential bits to the results circuit 860. The results circuit 860 may be implemented as a four-input multiplexer having a selection signal generated based on CLK1-4. Whichever of the four clocks is asserted (e.g., rising edge) causes the results circuit to output the respective differentiator's circuit output value as the digital output value 125 from the filter.

With four clocks CLK1-CLK4 used to clock the differentiator circuits 820, 830, 840, and 850, the results circuit 860 collectively receives data from the differentiator circuits at a rate that is four-times the data rate of a sinc filter having a single differentiator circuit. In general, the data rate output by the filter 120 is a function of the number of differentiator circuits implemented within the filter. The data rate output by the filter is:

$$\text{data rate} = N \times (F_{\text{CLKA}}) / \text{OSR}$$

where N is the number of differentiator circuits and F\_CLKA is the frequency of CLKA (the clock used to clock the integrators within the integrator circuit 210).

In this description, the term "couple" may cover connections, communications, or signal paths that enable a functional relationship consistent with this description. For example, if device A generates a signal to control device B to perform an action: (a) in a first example, device A is coupled to device B by direct connection; or (b) in a second example, device A is coupled to device B through intervening component C if intervening component C does not alter the functional relationship between device A and device B, such that device B is controlled by device A via the control signal generated by device A.

Modifications are possible in the described embodiments, and other embodiments are possible, within the scope of the claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A filter for an analog-to-digital converter, the filter comprising:

- a first integrator having a first integrator clock input, a data input, and a data output;
- a first differentiator having a first differentiator clock input, a data input, and a data output;
- a first switch coupled between a data output of the first integrator and a data input of the first differentiator, the first switch having a first switch input;
- a second differentiator having a second differentiator clock input;
- a second switch coupled between the data output of the first integrator and a data input of the second differentiator, the second switch having a second switch input; and
- a clock circuit coupled to the first integrator clock input, the first and second differentiator clock inputs, and to the first and second switch inputs, the clock circuit comprising:
  - a first clock generator coupled to the first integrator;
  - a second clock generator coupled to the first switch and to the first differentiator; and
  - a third clock generator coupled to the second switch and to the second differentiator.

2. The filter of claim 1, in which the filter further comprises a results circuit coupled to the data output of the first differentiator and the data output of the second differentiator.

3. The filter of claim 2, in which the results circuit includes a multiplexer.

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4. The filter of claim 1, further comprising:  
 a second integrator having a data output coupled to the  
 data input of the first integrator, the second integrator  
 having a second integrator clock input;  
 a third differentiator having a data input coupled to the  
 data output of the first differentiator, the third differ-  
 entiator having a third differentiator clock input; and  
 a fourth differentiator having a data input coupled to the  
 data output of the second differentiator, the fourth  
 differentiator having a fourth differentiator clock input.
5. The filter of claim 1, wherein the third clock generator  
 comprises an inverter coupled to the second clock generator.
6. The filter of claim 1, further comprising:  
 a third differentiator having a third differentiator clock  
 input; and  
 a third switch coupled between the first integrator and the  
 third differentiator.
7. The filter of claim 1, wherein the second clock gen-  
 erator comprises a clock divider coupled to a register.
8. An analog-to-digital converter (ADC), comprising:  
 a modulator having a modulator input and a modulator  
 output;  
 an integrator circuit having an integrator circuit input and  
 an integrator output, the integrator circuit input coupled  
 to the modulator output;  
 a first differentiator circuit coupled to the integrator  
 output, the first differentiator circuit coupled to a first  
 clock generator; and  
 a second differentiator circuit coupled to the integrator  
 output, the second differentiator circuit coupled to a  
 second clock generator.
9. The ADC of claim 8, in which the modulator is a  
 delta-sigma modulator.
10. The ADC of claim 8, in which the first differentiator  
 circuit includes at least two first differentiator circuit differ-  
 entiators, and the second differentiator circuit includes at  
 least two second differentiator circuit differentiators.
11. The ADC of claim 8, in which:  
 the integrator circuit includes at least three integrators;  
 the first differentiator circuit includes at least three first  
 differentiator circuit differentiators; and  
 the second differentiator circuit includes at least three  
 second differentiator circuit differentiators.
12. The ADC of claim 8, in which the first differentiator  
 circuit has a first differentiator circuit output, and the second  
 differentiator circuit has a second differentiator circuit out-  
 put, and the ADC further comprises a results circuit coupled  
 to the first and second differentiator circuit outputs.

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13. The ADC of claim 12, in which:  
 the results circuit includes a multiplexer having a first  
 multiplexer input, a second multiplexer input, and a  
 selection input;  
 the first differentiator circuit output is coupled to the first  
 multiplexer input;  
 the second differentiator circuit output is coupled to the  
 second multiplexer input; and  
 the first and second clocks have frequencies that are equal  
 to each other.
14. The ADC of claim 8, in which the first and second  
 clocks are 180 degrees out of phase with respect to each  
 other.
15. The ADC of claim 8, further comprising:  
 a third differentiator circuit coupled to the integrator  
 output.
16. The ADC of claim 15, wherein the first, second, and  
 third clocks have a same frequency.
17. The ADC of claim 8, further including:  
 a first switch coupled between the integrator output and  
 the first differentiator circuit; and  
 a second switch coupled between the integrator output  
 and the second differentiator circuit.
18. An analog-to-digital converter (ADC), comprising:  
 a delta-sigma modulator having a modulator input and a  
 modulator output;  
 an integrator circuit having an integrator circuit input and  
 an integrator output, the integrator circuit input coupled  
 to the modulator output and to a first clock generator;  
 a first differentiator circuit coupled to a second clock  
 generator;  
 a first switch coupled between the integrator output and  
 the first differentiator circuit;  
 a second differentiator circuit coupled to a third clock  
 generator;  
 a second switch coupled between the integrator output  
 and the second differentiator circuit; and  
 a results circuit having first and second results circuit  
 inputs, the first results circuit input is coupled to the  
 first differentiator circuit, and the second results circuit  
 input is coupled to the second differentiator circuit.
19. The ADC of claim 18, wherein the results circuit  
 includes at least one a multiplexer or a register.
20. The ADC of claim 18, in which:  
 the first switch includes a first switch input; and  
 the second switch includes a second switch input.

\* \* \* \* \*